

Interview Extracts

Isobel Stock of Willunga's recollections of entertainment she had during her teenage years

We belonged to the church choir, so there was always choir rehearsals, practices for Sunday school anniversaries and high teas. Reading some of my mother's old letters recently, I really think they went out more in those days than we do now. You see entertainment comes to our homes now, whereas in those days we went out to sport, and I was a Girl Guide. I learnt music and so did my sisters, we played basketball. There seemed to be plenty to do. And church, we had morning church, evening church and Sunday school in the afternoon. We walked three miles there and back three times a day. And when it was Sunday school anniversary, then there was high tea on Monday night with a concert after.

Sidney Squire of Willunga's recollections of entertainment in the district

We used to have dancing – a bit of dancing. They used to have dances in the Agricultural Hall at Willunga, and Mrs Frank Aldam and Bessie Norman used to play the piano for the dances. There was no orchestra. And also for the pictures. They used to have silent pictures and Mrs Aldam used to play the piano for the silent pictures. Lovely old times to think back over those years. I used to go to a lot of dances.... We used to like best the dances in the Catholic Hall. They never used to have them very often, but they used to have nice dances, and they used to have nice suppers – and also in the Agricultural Hall they had a supper dance.

Raymond Payne of Aldinga's recollections of entertainment young blokes had in the Aldinga district

We had plenty of entertainment. Not so much around Aldinga but at McLaren Vale they had roller skating, they had dancing – roller skating during the week, dancing Saturday night. Willunga had the picture show and dancing. The pictures were shown in the Willunga [?Aldinga] Institute. Quite a going concern really reasonably late films what I remember of it.

Bill and Linda Norman of Aldinga's recollections of entertainment in the Aldinga district

We didn't dance, no, we didn't go very much. They used to have a few picture shows over there [Aldinga Institute]. They had them weekly. There wasn't much to go to. Concerts occasionally. The blind people used to come out with their violins. We usually used to try and go to those. They used to put on a school concert now and again afterwards.

Vera Gardiner of Willunga's recollections football and dances in her teenage years

Oh well in the teenage years, by that time we had a motorcar and it was a great thing. They used to have dances. We all played tennis and there was football. My father was

very keen on sports so we all, the whole family, we all went to football – we all followed the football. You all worked Saturday morning, you rushed home and had your lunch, had a bath, and raced off out to football. Then we'd go home and more than likely there'd be a dance at night. The dances really were more family dances those days, and we'd all go – mum and dad and the kids. And then as we grew older, well my brother drove the car and mum and dad stayed home.

Max Ellis of McLaren Vale's recollections of dances and balls in the district

Yes, loved to dance – went to all the dances round the place. And of course in later years there was a big choice. Balls, of course there'd be five or six big balls through the year, you know – bachelor's ball and all that sort of stuff, and the RSL ball. They used to engage an orchestra from outside. The last RSL ball we had just before the war, we engaged a Murray Bridge orchestra, and they were all Germans, and of course the war came. (laughs). That was the finish of that engagement. All I know was that they were a top band – they were really something.

Max Ellis of McLaren Vale's recollections of picture shows in the district

There was a picture – projection box – built. That's still there of course, upstairs. That was the big event of the week. Twice a week they had pictures and they packed the hall. They raised seats at the rear – three rows of raised seats. They were leather covered ones, yes they were. The first picture show I can remember was in the old hall and this chap, a fellow of the name of Jack Pappin. He used to tour the country with a mobile projector. They'd erect the screen up in the stage area. He directed his machine on this slate step outside the doors and he'd project from there..... wind it – wind the machine. Somebody would be playing the piano – had to provide the music. They were silent films before the talkies came in. Usually a Wild West or something.

Gladys Eatts of Aldinga's recollections of social functions in the district

Well there used to be concerts. Concert parties used to come out from Adelaide and we had vocalists and comedians, elocutionists and sometimes there'd be actors – they'd put on a play. We thought it was marvellous because there was no television or anything. These all took place in the Aldinga Institute. And there was always a concert on the night of January 1st. They had a carnival at Port Willunga – I can well remember the carnivals. I think they were sponsored by the Lodge – Forester's Lodge. They would have stalls, confectionary and fruit, under the jetty. I can't think offhand, they had several stalls.

Ruth Baxendale of Willunga's recollections of entertainment in her teenage years during the war years

My teenage years really were the war years, the bulk of them, and so that was, you know, quite a busy time I suppose. But, well there you are, through the church some of the singing, perhaps entertainment. At that particular time the Reverend Hughes was there and his wife, a singer of note – of some standing – and to raise money for the war effort she got a concert party together. Quite a wide-ranging age group because there were older men who used to sing in a quartet, or a choir. And that was nice too

because it didn't matter which religion they were, I mean, we all got together. We used to do some concerts in the hall at Willunga, and we went to McLaren Vale. I remember once we went to Kuitpo and once we went down to Port Noarlunga. They were good fun days through that. I mean the things we did all seem rather simple now, but it was pleasant to do it and we raised money.

Fay Hunt of Maslin Beach's recollections of picture night and dances in the Aldinga district

Dances were Saturday night. If you didn't go to a dance there was something very much the matter. Wednesday nights was picture night. There was actually more, I think, going on on a town in those days that you enjoyed as young people than what is around now. It's usually hotels or something what they've got to go to now.